

C. H. S.

BANDWAGON

Vol. 7, No. 1—JANUARY ISSUE— 32

15c



Courtesy of Robert D. Good

Barnum and Bailey "Spain" Bandwagon and 10-horse team.
Note all horses in step.

— The Circusiana Magazine —

C. H. S.

Bandwagon

P. O. Box 235
Richmond, Indiana

JANUARY ISSUE, 1952
Vol. 7 No. 1

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15c a single copy
\$1.00 a year in U.S.A.

Advertising rates—
\$1.00 per col. inch

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There is an interesting illustrated article in the October (1951) issue of NATURAL HISTORY anent the first elephant ever brought to America. The writer, however, confused this first elephant (brought from India by Jacob Crowninshield of Salem in 1796) with Old Bet who was the second elephant to reach our shores. The Crowninshield elephant apparently had no name, being known only as "the elephant." The writer of the article also confused Hachaliah Bailey with the much later James A. Bailey who wasn't really a Bailey at all.

—Sent in by Allen Wescott

Are You Deadwood?

We have a number of names on our List of members, that are "deadwood." Meaning that those persons are not up to date in payment of dues. These persons have been receiving all the benefits of CHS—that is they get the Bandwagon—they get the pictures—they get what ever else is mailed out to the members—and last but not least, they are able to say: "I am a member of the Circus Historical Society." They don't mention though that they are not members in good standing. I, as Secretary, ask that each of you when you read this, take the time to check your membership card and see if you are numbered among this group. I'd like to have everyone paid up—I'd like not to have to advise any one of you that I have dropped you from the membership list. I want to get out a new Roster of members. In fact I have had several requests that I do this. I can't list YOU as a member if you are not paid up. So—let's all get with it—if you are in arrears—pay up. If you are no longer interested in CHS, will you please drop me a card telling me of this fact? I want to be fair and square with you all, but some of you are not being fair to CHS. Think about this and act accordingly.

In conclusion, Agnes and I thank all of you for your faith in us, as evidenced by your votes in the recent election. We appreciate your votes and hope to be worthy of your confidence in us.

ROBERT C. KING,
Secretary

Bob Stevens, owner of Stevens Bros. Circus, Hugo, Oklahoma, and Clara Turner were married on January 14th.

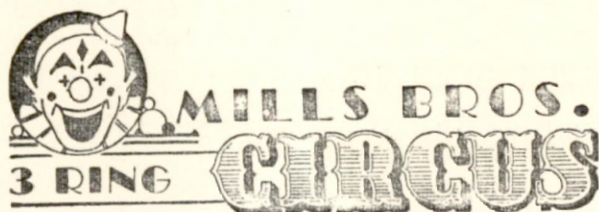
To the C. H. S. Members

One again you have elected me to another two-year term, as your President. During the past five years, I have tried to fulfill my office as faithfully as I could, I know that it is an utter impossibility to please everyone.

Reviewing the past five years. . . we have held a Convention every year, Jamestown, N. Y.; South Bend, Ind.; Baraboo, Wisc.; Chicago, Ill., and Cincinnati, Ohio. I attended every one. This year we will again return to Baraboo, Wisc. I will announce the dates by the first of April as we are trying to arrange to hold it with a circus, either the latter part of July or early August. Our treasury is in good financial balance. It is true we have lost members but we have also gained new ones.

Our new Vice-President, Bill Green, is well known to all of you. He was one of the charter members, No. 9, editor of the "Call of the Calliope" and I feel will make a fine officer. Bob King, Walter Pietschmann, and I, are old wheel horses, and I know that Agnes King as editor will continue to do a good job. So let us all work together and keep CHS on an even keel, recognized as a respected club preserving the circus lore of old as well as new.

BETTE LEONARD



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Bette Leonard Re-Elected President of C. H. S.

In the recent election of officers of CHS, Bette Leonard was again elected to the office of President, by a large majority. Bette has done a good job as our President, and I am sure that we all wish to offer our congratulations to her on her re-election.

As Secretary, also re-elected, I have a bone to pick with a number of you. I sent out 250 ballots to the list of members, and only 145 ballots were returned to Bill Kasiska, Election Commissioner. That means that 105 of you did not take enough interest in CHS to vote for the officers. From time to time I am advised by some member that he or she is not satisfied with the way things are going. There is but one way for you to make a change in some of these things—and that is to vote. As a nation, we are a little lax in our privilege to vote; we criticize the administration, but if we do not vote, why should we be critical of what is done—whether it is our governmental officials or the officials of our Circus Historical Society? It's too late to vote now, but let each member of CHS remember this—and two years from now when we have our next election—LET'S EVERYBODY VOTE!

Following are the results of the election:

FOR PRESIDENT—Bette Leonard, 112; C. S. Karland Frischkorn, 32; Blank, 1.

FOR VICE-PRESIDENT—Wm. "Bill" Green, 89; Robert Bernard, 9; Richard Conover, 33; John Heidl, 7; John Boyle, 1; Chalmer Condon, 1; Bill Kasiska, 1; Johnny Vogelsang, 1; Blank, 3.

FOR SECRETARY—Robert C. King, 120; John Heidl, 21; Bill Kasiska, 1; Blank, 3.

FOR TREASURER—Walter Pietschmann, 65; Clarence Shank, 37; Robert C. King, 40; Defective Ballots, 2; Blank, 1.

EDITOR OF THE BANDWAGON—Agnes W. King, 136; Ed. Cripps, 1; Bill Green, 2; Charles Kitto, 1; Bette Leonard, 1; Blank, 4.

The above returns have been certified to the Secretary by Bill Kasiska, Election Commissioner.

ROBERT C. KING, Secretary

Christy Bros. Circus Final Tour 1930

By Joseph T. Bradbury, No. 442

Christy Bros. Big 5 Ring Circus, owned and operated by G. W. Christy made its final tour in 1930. The Christy show was one of the most beautiful shows that ever toured. It is well remembered and loved by all circus fans. The 20 car train was loaded with old bandwagons and tableaux from the Ringling Bros. Barnum & Bailey Circus which Christy had purchased from that show after it ceased parading following the 1919 season. Among these famous old wagons were the Lion and Mirror Bandwagon, the America, Columbia, and Asia tableaux, and the old Cleopatra's Barge or Swan Bandwagon from the Forepaugh Circus. Christy also had many old carved Barnum & Bailey cages in his menagerie, as well as the delightful little cross cages that the small fry loved so well.

G. W. Christy, the "young Barnum," in addition to having the Christy Bros. and Lee Bros. circuses on the road, was also a dealer in circus equipment.

The tragic story of the ill-fated 1930 tour is almost a pattern for so many shows that failed during the depression, but few can match the loyalty of the Christy personnel in getting the show out of the Rockies and back into the quarters at South Houston, Texas.

A series of misfortunes caused the shows failure. Bad business caused by the depression was foremost, then extremely bad weather on a "too early" tour of the Northwestern and Plain states aided in bringing about the shows halt.

The show opened on 20 cars in Galveston, Texas, April 1. For sentimental reasons Christy usually opened his show in that city. In 1913 he first brought his 2 car show to Texas and wintered in Galveston and made his first start there on the road to success.

The staff and department heads for 1930 were as follows: Southern Equipment Company, owner; George W. Christy, manager; Mrs. George W. Christy, treasurer; W. M. Thompson, asst. manager; W. H. Culp, legal adjuster; Bert Rutherford, general agent; J. C. Rhodes, contracting agent; A. C. Bradley, 24-hour man; Rhoda Royal, equestrian director; Everette James, bandmaster; Prof. Deu, side show manager; Jake Friedman, steward; Norman Bain, supt. big top canvas; Curley Dixon, trainmaster; Charles Conners, stock; Jim

Sculley, elephants; Harry P. Kutz, concessions; James Snyder, front door and timekeeper; A. G. Green, banners. Wilson Lindsay was producing clown and clown alley included, Pat Lindsey, Stubbie Lindsey, John Foley, Charles Nelson, Charles Brawley, Albert Chaplin, Thomas Thornton, George Jennier, and Lee Smith.

The show used an entire new canvas outfit from pit show to the cookhouse. Big top seating capacity was increased due to the discontinuance of the famous opening spec "Noah and the Ark," that had been used in past years. A bright, snappy, colorful tournament was substituted for the "Ark." All of the wardrobe and trappings were new. The show retained the novelty of the previous year, that of the open air menagerie with the cages under broad canopies. Twenty cages were carried, along with 9 elephants, 14 camels, several zebras and other lead stock to complete the very extensive menagerie. Some 60 head of ponies were also carried.

The 1930 street parade was by far the longest and most spectacular parade ever presented by Christy. Many of the famous old Ringling Bros., Barnum & Bailey, and Forepaugh-Sells Bros. bandwagons and tableaux were in that parade. Also an air calliope made into an old Barnum & Bailey corner statue then was present, and the old Louella Forepaugh Fish Wild West steam calliope was used. This steam calliope got to Christy after serving on the Gollmar Bros. Circus for many years.

Animal acts highlighted the 1930 performance presented in 5 rings. The equine display was unusual. Horses played football, others danced a clog on platforms, and a large menagerie number was presented. Domestic animals were also present in the performance. Common house cats climbed and swung on ropes, bantam roosters jumped over hurdles and rode a Ferris Wheel. Goats walked tight wire, and eight troupes of canines worked at one time.

Trained leopards, zebras, camels, and elephants also performed. Other features included the Knight Family of acrobats; the Li Hung Chin Chinese troupe of tumblers; and the Connors troupe of wire walkers. Indians were also present in the performance as well as in the Wild West Concert doing native Indian dances.

Business was good at the opener, but the show ran into trouble with government officials over the dipping of animals for health regulations, and several costly delays were caused. The show moved next to Goose Creek, then to Port Arthur, and then on into Louisiana and Arkansas. Business in the latter state was spotted. Hot Springs had 2 capacity houses, El Dorado and Russellville were fair, but Camden was terrible. Show then moved into Oklahoma. Oklahoma City was poor as were most other Oklahoma towns, and the show was routed back into Texas for stands in the Panhandle at Pampa, Borger, and Amarillo. Amarillo on May 2 gave no business at all, even at 25 cents and 50 cent prices. From the Panhandle the show went into New Mexico and business was even worse. At Clovis it was decided to cut the show to 10 cars, the other 10 being sent back to quarters. That left the show with only 2 sleepers, no place for the workmen or drivers to sleep but on the flats. There were now 4 instead of 9 elephants, 3 instead of 14 camels. The animal cages were cut and when the show got in it looked like an enlarged three car outfit. After the cut the show apparently made the mistake of playing the same towns in the West it had with the 20 car show and the public was not slow in noticing the difference. Sante Fe was fairly good, but Vaughn, Clovis and other New Mexico stands were bad.

The show went north and was at Cheyenne, Wyoming, on May 17, and played in a snowstorm. The show struggled through cold, rain, and snow for almost five weeks. At O'Neill, Neb., on May 19, the sun came out and a pretty day was at hand. However business was not affected and only fair turnouts were present for both shows. Christy played Hastings, Neb., May 22, Norfolk, 23rd, and Niobra, 24th. After a few more Nebraska stands the show backtracked and returned to Wyoming. Casper, Wyoming, was played May 29, Sheridan, 30th, Killette, 31st, and Newcastle, June 1. The Decoration Day stand at Sheridan did a good matinee, but no parade was given. A 52-mile per hour gale was present all day and it was with difficulty that the show got the big top in the air, and it was considerably damaged. South Dakota was entered June 2 at Hot Springs. Then Deadwood, 3rd, Belle Fourche, 4th, Rapid City, 5th, Murdo, 6th, Chamberlain, 7th, Mitchell, 9th, and Redfield, 10th. No parades were given at Deadwood and Rapid City. Wind and rain ruined most days while in South Dakota. At Mitchell, the three bands and steam calliope were broadcast as the parade passed the Corn Palace.

Glen Ullin, North Dakota, was played June 13, and the show entered Montana June 14, at Glendive.

The week of June 15 to 21 was a record one for the show in the way of runs, as 9 towns were played in 7 days. Route was as follows: Wibaux, Mont., June 15; Sidney, Mont., 16th; Watford, N.D., 17th; Williston, N. D., 18th; Plentywood, Mont., 19th, matinee, Bainville, Mont., 19th, night; Wolf Point, Mont., 20th, matinee, Glasgow, Mont., 20th, night; Great Falls, Mont., 21st.

The Billboard records the 4 towns in 2 days feat as follows:

"Glasgow, Mont., June 21. The Christy Bros. Circus arrived in Glasgow, Friday night shortly after 6 o'clock and unloaded almost on the showgrounds using the same lot as the appearance here two years ago. The work of erecting the side show and the big top was accomplished in record time and the side show was open for business at 7:15. The big show performance started on time. It is daylight here until around ten o'clock and this made the erection of the tents much easier. A crew had been sent on from Wolf Point, where the show was exhibiting the afternoon to drive the stakes and lay out the lot, and much valuable time was thus saved. The circus has now broken its former record and has made four towns in two days.

"The circus left Williston, N. D., after midnight June 19, and ran up a branch from Bainville, Mont., to Plentywood, where an afternoon performance was given to good business, starting at 1:20. The show was over and the train loaded and left at 4 o'clock for Bainville, where a night performance was given. The show train arrived here at 6:20 p.m. making a run of 59 miles. The tents were up and the night show started at 9 o'clock. The side show opened at 8 and had a good play. Here also the lot had been laid out and the stakes driven by Eddie Johnson and a crew of men sent on ahead.

"The train was behind a wreck on the run to Wolf Point for the afternoon show on Friday, but arrived early enough to allow a street parade here which was back on the lot at 11:30. Big crowds of Indians in town from the reservation and good matinee, which started at 1 o'clock.

"The train was loaded right at the lot and left for Glasgow at 4 o'clock. The Great Northern road gave the show splendid service and made the runs on time in every instance, making it possible to carry out the program as scheduled.

"After successfully accomplishing the feat of playing nine towns in one week the Christy Show is back to normal again."

It was decided in late June to cut out the street parade for the rest of the season or at least while the show was still in Western country. Several parades had been missed each week due to bad weather, late arrivals, etc.

Montana business was way off, and stands at Livingston, Bozeman, Helena, and Deer Lodge were poor. Anaconda played Sunday, June 29, was good. Dillon on June 30, was the last Montana stand and then the show moved into Idaho.

After a few stands in Idaho, the show went into Wyoming again and eastward.

Things were getting steadily worse, but Christy however, fought against hope, every day being worse than the previous one, and he was paying out his fast dwindling bankroll to keep the show mov-

ing. Of course salaries had been cut by necessity but the personnel stayed on until the last. Luck for the show was also tough. Christy had counted on a big July 4 date at Rock Springs, Wyo., but the big celebration of the passing of the Lewis & Clarke expedition took all the people and the show played to less than \$270.00 for both performances. Rawlins the next day was even worse. Christy was down and out and hoped to get transportation at Hanna, a Union Pacific coal town, July 6, but it was a bloomer. The next day, July 7, at Greeley, Colo., was the last. Through the aid of Jack Fenton, who had the advertising banners on the show, the train was able to be sent back to Houston quarters.

It never returned to the road. Most of the physical equipment was sold to Jess Adkins and Zack Terrell in 1935, and some more to Ken Maynard in 1936.

(Many thanks to George Chindahl for much information used in this story).

Announcement Extraordinary . . .

TO COLLECTORS AND MODEL BULDERS

Circus Wagon Photographs

This is first and exclusive offering of the collection taken by W. C. Sommerville and C. J. Baker of the Baker & Lockwood Mfg. Co. "The Tent Show Builders" during the years 1900 to 1910.

RINGLING BROS. — CARL HAGENBECK — SELLS-FLOTO

GENTRY BROS. — 101 RANCH WILD WEST

PAWNEE BILL WILD WEST — CAMPBELL BROS.

NORRIS & ROWE — ADAM FOREPAUGH

SELLS BROS — ETC.

They are close up parade shots showing wagons and horses, riders and a few lot scenes. Taken when the parade and fine carved wagons were in their prime.

I am pleased to make these selected photographs available to collectors and model builders and many friends who have obtained photos from my collection.

Pre-viewed and recommended by Col. W. H. Woodcock,
CHS, CFA, CMB&OA

SEND 6¢ FOR DESCRIPTIVE LIST

J. W. BEGGS

7125 Park Rd. Eastwood Hills, KANSAS CITY 3, MO.

Al G. Kelly & Miller Bros. Circus

1951 Season

By "Calliope" Bill Green, No. 9

Editor's Note—This excellent article by Bill Green was accompanied by some photos. Sorry that circumstances keep us from using them.

Whenever we pay a visit to the Al G. Kelly & Miller Bros. Circus we invariably have such an enjoyable time that we fail to take notes on the performance. We must again plead guilty in this respect following our two visits to the show but we will attempt to give some of our impressions of the show from memory as best we can.

Since the circus played only a Sunday matinee performance in Washington (May 20), we went to Clay Center, Kansas, the preceding Friday, where we caught the night show, as we wished to devote our time to visiting and taking pictures for the stand here.

We have never seen the Millers put on what we would call a poor performance in the past but this year's show is by far the finest which they have ever presented and is strictly CIRCUS from the opening Spec to the finale and with a "big show" atmosphere much more pronounced than ever before.

The Grand Entry which opens the show is a thing of beauty, with the all-new equipments and costumes especially designed for it and with the many animals which take part in it, it convinces the spectators from the start that this is no mediocre dog-and-pony show but a show of real merit. (Nor is anyone disappointed in this belief with what follows). The band leads the Spec in the good old traditional circus style which we regret to say has been abandoned by so many circuses in recent years.

The performance is presented in five rings and for the majority of the performance all five rings are in actual use. We missed our old friend Gus Kanerva and the glamorous Evelina Rossi, neither being with the show this year, but we found much new talent has been added, with, as always, the accent being on youth.

Among the new-comers the Maurillo's—a Mexican casting act, deserves special mention. Combining both thrills and comedy it is an excellent substitute for a high flying act which is not practical with the push-pole top now being used.

The Kriel Children—Jeanie, Pat and Richard—also deserve much credit. These young, versatile and charming youngsters never fail to please with their

many turns—balancing, juggling, contortion, wire-walking—all of which they are quite adept in. And Mama and Papa Kriel do more than their bit with the clowning.

We think that the real hit of the show, however, is Bill Woodcock's superbly trained elephants which are used at several times throughout the performance and who wind up the show with the always popular long mount on the track. We've seen lots of performing elephants but we think we are safe in our contention that there is no other show now out which can offer a swifter moving or better trained troupe of bulls than those presented by Bill Woodcock and the attractive ladies who assist in the various routines.

The new act which Bill has dreamed up with one of the bulls hitched to a cart is a honey and we think Bill may have some other new ideas up his sleeve which he'll be springing one of these days.

The walk-around on the track with Miss Oklahoma (hippo) is also a strong feature that does much to add a "big show" flavor to the performance.

The clowning (which has always been the weakest thing on this show) has been greatly improved, but we feel that more clowns are still needed for the size which the show has now attained. Those that they now have are very good—much better than average, in fact—and do a mighty good job in getting laughs but a five ring performance requires more than they now have and additions to clown alley would make a better showing.

The liberty horses, riding acts, and trained dogs and ponies which comprise the other animal acts on the show are well-trained and presented in the usual pleasing manner which the Millers have always demanded.

Charlie Cuthbert leads an 11-piece band which should please the most critical lovers of circus music. It looks like a circus band and what's more it sounds like one! Walt Stevens does a good job on the air calliope.

Tiger Bill Snyder announces the show and has charge of the Wild West concert that follows the big show.

The menagerie as usual is combined with the side show and comprises of about the same variety of animals as last season. Mel Lewis, genial manager, has a strong line-up of talent this year—a snappy colored minstrel band, blade box, Jose de Leon, armless wonder and the two Red Devils, fire act. The latter is a decided novelty in the field of fire eating. The things they do with fire is truly remarkable. We might add that the things which Senor de Leon does with his "educated" toes are likewise remarkable. A half-and-half is presented in an annex.

The giraffe and gorilla are exhibited on the midway as separate attractions. There is also a pony ride and the usual eating concessions, snow cones, souvenirs, etc., but the usual policy of the Millers is in effect and there is no grift of any kind to be seen on the midway or in the side show.

In spite of the fact that there had been almost nothing but rain in this locality for the week preceding the show here, Circus Day in Washington was ideal. A bright, warm, sunny day just "made-to-order" for a circus.

Although the lot was a good two miles from town, the townspeople were quick to realize that this was no small show when they saw the large beautifully painted and decorated trucks coming through town en route to the lot and they hastened to drive out and watch the always fascinating sight of a circus setting up with the happy result that the attendance for the matinee was a good "straw" house—the first that the writer has had the pleasure of seeing in Washington since childhood.

General admission is 90c, plus tax; reserve seats 40c; side show is 25c and the gorilla and giraffe exhibits 15c each.

Our own activities that day were varied and many, as our time was divided between visiting old friends, making new ones and taking pictures.

It was a field day for photographers. We noticed a great many cameras in use on the lot all day. John Thiele, CFA, and Jim McRoberts, CHS, both of Topeka, drove over to spend the day and take pictures and Hank Muth, local photographer obtained permission to take pictures during the performance inside the big top. The four of us were guests of our good friend and fellow CHS member for a chicken dinner with all the trimmings in the cookhouse which we all greatly enjoyed. Lone is superintendent of the concessions with the show.

Another "free lance" photographer, F. R. Lobaugh, Washington attorney, was on the lot all day taking both stills and

colored movies and joined us in the backyard during the performance.

Also seen on the lot was our old friend Virge Campbell—the last of the famous Campbell Bros.—who never misses an opportunity of seeing a circus when one is near enough his present home of Fairbury, Nebraska.

We had hoped that time would permit some of our friends from the show to pay us a brief visit and look at our collection (Bill Woodcock and Lone Stevens, in particular) but the show had been fighting mud and rain for a week and everyone was too busy and worn out for it to be possible. So our only visitor from the show was Johnny Grady, show painter, who came out to the shop for an all-too-short visit.

In conclusion, we will say that the Millers are to be congratulated on the fine show which they have this season. They have added to their already strong menagerie, a top-notch performance, which in addition to their modern equipment and courteous and honest dealings with the public and their attractive appearance both off and on the lot makes it easy to understand why this show is fast making circus history. We doubt very much if there is anything on trucks which can equal them, much less surpass them.

We also feel that much credit is due the show's general agent, Art Miller and the fine staff of advertising men who support him. Art was in town over a week-end and we had the pleasure of spending considerable time with him and observing how he works. It is our belief that the Millers are fortunate in having an agent of his ability. And aside from being a good agent, we found him a swell fellow whose friendly visits we'll remember whenever we recall our enjoyable visits to the show.

1951 Hunt Bros.

10 Views — \$1.00

Send for complete List

GEORGE A. LANPHEAR

CIRCUS PHOTOS

P. O. Box 3

NORTH STONINGTON, CONN.

A Side-Show Review

By Barry Gray

Sent in by Bette Leonard

There's a bunch of good folks
That it's worth while to know,
With the Ringling and
Barnum & Bailey Side Show.

You pause at the entrance
Before going inside,
And encounter the manager,
A jolly fellow named "Clyde."

Or perhaps his assistant,
A chap they call "Dick,"
And a better "right bower"
It would be hard to pick.

Candy Shelton, Harry Wilson,
And Bob Crawford, too,
All line up in front
As the ticket-selling crew.

As you enter the tent
With ticket in hand,
To the music of P. G. Lowry's
Colored Jazz Band.

Tom Nichols will greet you
And take up your "ducket,"
And if he doesn't get it,
Paddy Lovell will pluck it.

When you arrive on the inside,
And "rubber about,
"Your attention right here,"
Harry Creamer will shout.

And introduces a cute little
Lady, who smiles,
As "Violet"—"Sweet Violet"—
With her den of reptiles.

"Cliko, the Bushman,"
Is the next one we meet.
He will shake your hand warmly
And then "shake his feet."

The "tall boy from Texas"
Is the next one we spy,
His name is Jack Earle,
But they call him "Sky High."

And now we are looking
At a queer little fellow;
The lecturer says that
His name is "Laurello."

With his head turned around,
As his act he is showing,
You can't really tell
Whether he's "coming" or "going."

You put on your glasses
And next take a peek
At something they've christened
"The Skeleton Sheik."

He could fall thru a knothole,
This "stringbean," called "Slats,"
And he dresses in tights,
With slippers and spats.

The "Four Dancing Dolls"
Are the next that we see,
With the "Unholy Harry,"
Of the "Unholy Three."

Grace, Tiny and Daisy
Complete the midget quartet,
And their singing and dancing
Is clever, you bet.

Miss Londy, the giantess,
Is next to arise,
And a "tower of loveliness"
Welcomes your eyes.

If you try to flirt with her,
She will caution you not to,
Lest you might get a challenge
To a "duel" with Otto.

Then there's "Eko" and "Mike,"
The "Ambassadors From Mars,"
But we doubt if they ever
Have "mingled with stars."

The wool on their heads
Is like that of the sheep,
And they sit there as peaceful
As if in a sleep.

Then up jumps a fellow,
Who starts to get busy,
And his squirms and contortions
Would make you quite dizzy.

He can unjoint his shoulders,
His arms and his wrist;
His name isn't twisted,
It's just "Ecan Twist."

Tom, Tom, the fat boy,
Is next in his turn,
With a smile on his face,
And he's single, we learn.

The scales he will tip
At "six forty-four,"
He'd weigh "six forty-five"
If he weighed a pound more.

A tattooed young lady
Is the next to appear,
And she carries a picture
For each day of the year.

Her name, it is Trixie,
And if you can get her to talk,
She'll tell you she was tattooed
By Wagner of New York.

The Hawaiian Trio
Is next down the line,
And their music and singing
Is sure "superfine."

They sing "Yak-a-Hooly,"
And "Hula-Hula-Boo,"
Until they're called to the front
For the big ballyhoo.

On the same platform with them
Is a stately big chair,
Where "Peggy from Paris"
Appears often there.

She calls your first name,
And she's a marvel, 'tis said;
And, strange to relate,
She is always "ahead."

Then we come to Roy Clark,
With his snakes and baboons;
He surprises the natives
On dull afternoons.

The Bag-Punching Clarks
Are next in their turn,
But between "Roy" and "them"
There's no "kinship" you learn.

Their bag-punching act
Is a pleasure to see;
They're the best on the market,
Like "Clark's O. N. T."

Look up now, good folks,
And prepare to be happy,
For "Old Punch" is announced,
And Harry says "Make it snappy."

For a few lively minutes,
Barry Gray and his wife
Will give a show with their puppets
That brings joy to your life.

Miss Lillian Maloney
Is the next one to greet you,
With a smile she will say
That she's tickled to meet you.

She knows all the troupers
That you know and I know;
She's a great entertainer,
This accomplished Albino.

Her companion is "Edna,"
You sure will adore her;
She's a sword swallower, and clever,
Like her uncle before her.

Now turn and look yonder—
We almost forgot him—
And you'll have to look sharply
In order to spot him.

He's a midget, and 19,
If we understand right;
It's none other than "Major,"
Our own Major Mite.

You may have seen dwarfs
And midgets galore,
But never a man
Just as tiny before.

And, last, but not least,
There arises to view,
A giant of giants,
Who stands "eight feet, two."

A product of Texas,
And proud of his State,
Twenty-nine years of age,
Well proportioned and straight.

Not slender, nor slim,
Nor clumsy, nor stout,
That's Captain Jim Tarver,
You've seen him, no doubt.

This way for the exit,
Walter Gilliland yells,
And you wonder if that's something
That Jimmy Nunn sells.

Then you suddenly find yourself
Out in the rain,
Wondering if it will be all there,
When you come again.

Reprinted from The Billboard, December 25, 1926

The first elephant to be exhibited in this country was brought from Bengal in 1796 by Capt. Jacob Towninshield, master of the America, out of Salem. It was shown to the public in a hall rented at Broadway and Beaver Street in New York. Many believed the elephant to be a fake.

—Reprinted from New York Times, January 8, 1952

Bonnie Jean Hall, daughter of Frank and Zella Hall, former owners of the Van Amberg Circus out of Whitewater, Wisconsin, was married to Louis F. Moody on Saturday, September 22, 1951, at Evansville, Indiana. The bride is a member of the W. A. C. and her husband is also with the United States Army.

—Hobby-Bandwagon, January Issue, 1952—Page 11

State of Florida Acquires Chambers Collection

News Release by Ringling Museum, Sarasota, Florida

The most famous collection in the world of original source material on the circus has just become the property of the State of Florida, and will soon be placed on display in the Museum of the American Circus, in Sarasota.

The collection, gathered together by the late C. Spencer Chambers, nationally known educator of Syracuse, N. Y., contains some 25,000 items, many of which are very rare indeed. It is valued at approximately \$30,000, and individual units are estimated at as much as several hundred dollars each.

According to John L. Sullivan, curator of the Circus Museum, who was instrumental in obtaining the material, the purchase was made at an exceedingly reasonable figure, after Mr. Chamber's recent death.

Although the greater part of the collection consists of material concerned directly with the circus itself, it also contains much on the theater, magic, and allied entertainment. It is possible, Mr. Sullivan says, that the State may dispose of certain sections, which are not related closely to the theme of the museum, and also of numerous duplicates, but the bulk will be placed on view as soon as possible.

Those doing research will be able to find here answers to questions that otherwise might take prolonged delving in many collections. What did Astley's Circus, in London, look like in 1777? What actors appeared in what plays at the Boston Museum theater in 1852-1853? In what fashion was a picture of the Southwark Fair "invented, painted and engraved" by William Hogarth in 1733? What did the Peckham Fat Boy look like? What did the Illustrated London News write about "Mdle. Ella" at the Drury Lane Theater in November, 1853? What Christmas pantomime was presented at the New York Circus in 1869? How did Mr. Van Amburgh advertise his show in a herald in 1839? Where was a benefit given for Mr. James, clown, in 1807? Where did General Tom Thumb appear on the evening of March 30, 1854?

Here in Sarasota is the complete history of an entertainment that started with one elephant shown in a tavern yard, or one woman walking a tightrope in a city square, and developed into a colossal enterprise, with hundreds of cars carrying performers, animals and equipment for Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey. Here is the record of how it grew, how methods of transportation changed, how one or another type of attraction has prevailed and then been supplanted by others.

Hundreds of boxes of various sizes were required to hold the thousands upon thousands of pounds of printed matter transported from Syracuse to Sarasota. Although inventorying it all has begun already, museum officials say that the task will not be completed for many months.

Executives of the Chambers estate have organized, into 25 sections, the material the collector spent many years in acquiring. Among other things, there are: some 170 very fine, rare heralds printed during the past 100 years; 290 heralds and prints showing

the history of the circus from its early European development until 1890; 925 unmounted lithographs and posters; 128 very rare circus and theater prints and engravings; circus books, albums, routebooks, pressbooks, and programs; theater programs and playbills; 688 autographed photographs of theatrical celebrities; theater-circus items of special interest. In addition, there are books on the theater and on the ballet; stills of movie actors, vaudevillians and other entertainers; many books on magic, ventriloquism, palmistry, cards, minstrelsy, and so on; and unusual catalogues and pamphlets.

Authorities say that the section of heralds tracing the history of the circus is probably the most important of all. It is known as the Pitzer Collection, is internationally famous, and is invaluable in giving the European background of the American circus. Almost everything in it is dated before 1850.

There were arenas in ancient Rome, and races and fights were held there. But what we know as the circus was born in 1769 in London, when Philip Astley, a trick rider, found that he could gallop in a circle, standing on his horse, and centrifugal force would help him keep his balance. As posters show, he put that knowledge into effect in the unroofed Hippodrome he built in 1770, with a 42-foot circle of sawdust, known as the ring, which became the physical basis of the circus. In 1798, Astley built the famous Royal Amphitheater, first indoor circus, also in London.

Soon others joined the equestrians—tumblers, acrobats, clowns and rope dancers; then the animal trainers. Moreover, in England a stage was built at the side of the ring, with proscenium and orchestra pit, and dramas were added to the program.

The rarest set of lithographs in Sarasota is that showing, in three sections, the Barnum and Bailey Greatest Show on Earth, in 40 by 80 inch posters. The first section shows the most famous band wagon in the world, the Two Hemispheres, which itself may become the property of the Museum of the American Circus. B. J. Palmer of Davenport, Iowa, has offered to give the Two Hemispheres to the State of Florida, if a suitable building is constructed to hold it, on the Ringling property in Sarasota. The lithograph in the Chambers Collection, showing the ponderous wagon, which was drawn by 40 horses, is one of only two extant.

There is here also one of three known posters printed in 1843, announcing the appearance of the American-born Richard Sands, great equestrian, at the Royal English Opera House in London. The other two are in private collections. Sands, be it known, started out with Aron (sic) Turner who, in 1830, exhibited in a 90-foot round-top tent—the first of that shape ever to be used in any circus, it is said. Sands was an outstanding example of the type of man who wants to shine as a manager as well as performer, and the records show that he was unusually successful in both roles. He even designed some of his own posters, and his show is said to have sent out the first calliope on wheels, in a circus parade in 1858.

Art authorities will doubtless wax enthusiastic over the engraving of the Southwark Fair, by William Hogarth, one of the greatest engravers of all time, and the Rowlandson drawing of The Street Fair.

Circus fans may find that one of the items is not too closely related to the object of their enthusiasm, but there can be no question that it is unique. It is a letter to "Mr. Editor" by Steve Brodie, written on August 17, 1891, under his own letterhead, offering to

bet \$200 that he can jump from a "tower higher than 76 feet, in at least 18 feet of water and . . . reappear on the surface alive."

Among the least easily obtainable of the books are: *Histoire des Menageries*, by Gustave Loisel, and *Le Vieux Paris*, by Victor Furnel. The latter, published in 1887, traces the history of the circus in Paris for two centuries.

Merely in glancing through the lists, the eye is caught by innumerable invaluable bits of reference material: a life of Dan Rice, America's greatest clown; the Tyrwhitt-Drake "English Circus and Fair Grounds;" "Humbug of the World" by P. T. Barnum: a description of 15,000 "natural and foreign curiosities," published in 1812; Henry Thetard's "La Merveilleuse Histoire du Cirque;" a herald showing Martini Chiriski on the silver wire, in Allyn's Olympic Circus, 1869; the celebrated horses, Pyramus and Thisbe, in the Cirque National de Paris in 1848.

As old heralds and programs show, the English circus was usually held in an amphitheater of some sort; there was great emphasis on equestrian art; and pantomimes and other theatrical performances were included.

The American circus developed along somewhat different lines. Theatrical features were omitted. At the outset, the circus (a series of spectacular feats) and the menagerie developed separately. The round tent, with all it meant in mobility and convenience for the spectator, was essentially an American development.

It has been said that understanding of the circus and its fascination is one of the best methods of obtaining insight into the character of the American people. As an authority has pointed out, the deepest appeal of our circus during the 19th century was in its actuality rather than in its illusion—on skill in doing truly just the feats performers appeared to be accomplishing. Only the clown was kidding the onlooker. Here was no dream stuff—except the dream that the onlooker, too, might turn somersaults on horseback, hang by his teeth, or walk along a tiny wire high above the ground.

That dream seems to have been universal. Certainly some of our greatest men have been circus fans. And one of the first of those was the Father of His Country, himself.

In the Chambers Collection there is a herald announcing the first complete performance of a circus in this country—that offered by John B. Ricketts in Philadelphia on April 3, 1793. Ricketts had come from Scotland, and built an auditorium, after he had started with a riding school in 1792. The collection contains also a clipping from the Philadelphia Inquirer reporting that George Washington attended the circus on the 22nd of April, 1793, on the occasion of a benefit for the displaced persons from Cape Francois who were in the city.

Washington was a personal friend of Rickett's, rode horseback with him, sold him fine horses for the circus, and often attended performances. His presence guaranteed the respectability of the circus, though apparently that assurance was not really necessary, for Philadelphia had had a permanent theater in 1766, and way back in 1744 the first exhibition of tightrope walking in America had been held in an open space called Society Hill. An equestrian performance had been given under canvas in 1771 in Center Square, and others in 1772. Though a ban was put on such things in 1774, it was lifted in 1780.

(To be Continued in February Issue)

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Winter Quarters Data from Have-A-Laff Shows, but be careful!

By Art Doc Miller

Work in quarters is progressing at a dizzy rate of speed and off-hand between five and (190) men are at work there. General manager Save-A-Cent hit upon the idea of purchasing five gallons of red barn paint to mix with the one lone gallon of circus red. Seven baggage wagons were rushed through the paint shop before it was discovered the blend had turned a sickly lavender pink. This caused much consternation among the staff but Hic-cups Joe, the boss painter, suggested completing these wagons with a multicolored series of brush daubs. The outcome should resemble small pox or the measles. Some of the heavier wagons are in a sad state of neglect but Slivers Sam, wagon builder, is hard at work patching them with slats from lettuce crates. Claims he is saving the show hundreds of dollars and besides the thin slats are much easier to saw through.

Snake-Ears, the cook, has been giving the boys a wide variety of tempting meals. The first of the week he features bean soup, mid week, menu is changed to bean soup, and week ends everybody is served bean soup. Incidentally Snake-ears is very much in the dog house. Seems he has been housing chickens all winter in the shows only coach that didn't leak and recently the boss's wife decided to hold an impromptu party for her cronies in said coach and found it in a terrible condition. However, being in a somewhat jovial mood, and after several hilarious attempts the buxom gals climbed into the gilly car and held their party, laughter drifting from the car until early morn.

The problem of much needed spec wardrobe has been solved. Seems many years ago the town supported a theatrical costumer, long since departed, and the management secured the entire stock at an undisclosed price. Boastful Bernie, press agent, is burning mid-night oil writing a script to fit the unrelated array of costumes. He claims the tournament will be super and feature an original story about the Spanish American War.

Filthy Fred, blacksmith, has all wagon running gear in shape and has tightened the steel tires on the wagons by driving spikes into the rims. Claims its plenty good and saves time usually spent in removing and reshinking the tires. However, Filthy's failure to clip off the protruding point of one spike resulted in an unusual and unannounced strip tease eye opener at quarters. Seems a nifty looking school marm and her brood visited quarters for educational purposes and the smartly dressed damsel walked too close to said wagon wheel with its protruding angry spike. Without warning the sharp barb ripped the unsuspecting gals skirt plumb off her shapely figure. Her alarming shrieks and spectacular romp around the barn won the approval of showmen and students alike. Hawkeye, trainmaster, quick to sense future date material, rushed to her rescue with an old kid show banner and covered her shame and pride. Hic-cups is now at work on the tableau wagons and is a marvel at building up broken off carvings. He uses a mixture of barber shop sweepings and plaster. The tab "Sargasso Sea" was in a sad state having locked horns with a husky telephone pole but Hic-cups quickly transposed the scene into one called "Hades." Visitors eye it in silent awe and terror and all sniff the air noting the wagon appears to be impregnated with the aroma of Bourbon, Muscatel, and Slitz. Recently it was discovered some town thief had swiped a wagon wheel from the hyena cage. Later it was located, repainted in sunburst glory decorating the back bar of a side street oasis. Hawkeye has ripped off all the Bad Order placards from the flats and has had stenciled Inspected and Passed New York Central on all cars. Figures the fixer can square any beefs with the various R.R. lines.

Before making the home run last fall the management secured several ton of ancient lithos and these were stored away in the advance car. Paste Bucket Clate, boss biller, recently blew into quarters to pick up his extra shirt and was found in a fighting rage when he discovered the entire car infested with rats which had completely riddled his extra shirt,—and the entire stock of lithos.

Patch-it Paddy, boss canvasman, is extremely busy patching the various tops. He is using feed sacks instead of duck and rather than bother sewing on patches is cementing them on with roof cement. He claims they'll outlast the original canvas. The writer, at present connected with the city garbage disposal unit, will again be with the outfit as (24) hour agent. Every one is looking forward to a long prosperous season.

Hopefully Horsefeathers,

ART DOC MILLER